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Serve to lead



Iraqi Military Academy Al Rustamiyah
educates and trains future Iraqi officers

May 21, 2005

MNSTC-I

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Cover: An Iraqi non-commissioned officer marches cadets at the Iraqi Military Academy Al Rustamiyah as they call cadence during drill and ceremony training on a hot, overcast day.

Photo by U.S. Army Sgt. W. Watson Martin

Rice says freedom is on the march

By U.S. Army Sgt. W. Watson Martin
214th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

BAGHDAD, Iraq – United States



Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice enters the Iraqi Convention Center to answer questions from the media.

Photo by U.S. Army Sgt. W. Watson Martin

Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice made a late night stop at the Iraqi Convention Center for several interviews from both Iraqi and international media after a busy day of traveling all over Iraq to meet with

key Iraqi leaders May 15.

Rice met with Iraqi leadership during her visit to include Iraqi Prime Minister Ibrahim al-Jafaari and Deputy Prime Minister Ahmed Chalabi. It was Rice's first visit to Iraq since becoming secretary of state.

Many of the questions drew comments from Rice about how the Iraqi security forces are making it possible for the freely elected government to draft a constitution by the Aug. 15 deadline.

It is the belief of the

U.S. and the Iraqis to have Sunni involvement in drafting the new constitution. The government is unified and broadly represented with many Sunnis but they are, however, under represented in the National Assembly, said Rice.

"Iraqis are making enormous progress and they are to be congratulated on that," said Rice. "The success, so far, is an amazing story met by tall odds. The work ahead is to lay aside sectarian differences that were exacerbated by Saddam," she said.

She stated that Coalition and Iraqi forces need to take on terrorism in an all out war until innocent civilians can be safe to walk down the streets. Further, Rice added, Middle East ideologies of hatred need to be replaced with democracy where political aspirations can be channeled through a democratic process.

"When freedom is on the march, we are secure," said Rice.



Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice sits down with an Iraqi media representative during her visit to Iraq May 15.

Photo by U.S. Army Sgt. W. Watson Martin

"In the truest sense, freedom cannot be bestowed; it must be achieved."

— Franklin D. Roosevelt (1882 - 1945)

Iraqi Army expands area of Baghdad operations

By U.S. Army Spc. Matthew Wester

3rd Brigade, 1st Armored Division Public Affairs

BAGHDAD, Iraq – The 1st Battalion, 2nd Brigade, 6th Iraqi Army Division extended its area of responsibility this week, taking over security for a larger part of northwest and north central Baghdad.

“This was a transfer of authority of two large districts in the capital city of Baghdad from the 3rd Brigade, 1st Armored Division to the Iraqi Army,” said U.S. Army Col. David Bishop, commander, 3rd Brigade, 1st Armored Division.

“We have looked forward to expanding our operation and our work,” said Iraqi Lt. Col. Karben Qussay, commander of the 1st Battalion, based in the Adamiya section of Baghdad. “We have the full ability to expand our area of operations.”

The battalion’s sector now includes about one fourth of Baghdad, according to Qussay.

“There are seven zones in the area of Adamiya, and when I came here in January, we controlled five of those seven zones,” said U.S. Army Lt. Col. Jim Blackburn, commander, 1st Squadron, 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment, which is responsible for training the 1st Iraqi Battalion.



U.S. Army Col. Joseph Disalvo (left), commander, 2nd Brigade, 3rd U.S. Infantry Division and Iraqi Lt. Col. Karben Qussay, commander, 1st Battalion, 2nd Brigade, 6th Iraqi Army Division attend a transfer of authority meeting in the Adamiya section of Baghdad. The Iraqi 1st Battalion demonstrated its ability to expand security operations in their region. Their new area of operations was formerly patrolled by U.S. Forces and now belongs solely to Iraqi Security Forces.

Photo by U.S. Army Sgt. Kevin Bromley

“Now, the 1st Battalion controls all seven.”

“The bar has been raised now,” said U.S. Army Lt. Col. Mark Kerry, 256th Brigade Combat Team, Louisiana National Guard and commander of a military transition team working with the 6th Iraqi Army Division. “They have proven they can handle it.”

The Iraqi battalion will now patrol areas like the al’ Shab section of Baghdad on their own, Kerry said. He added that the additional area secured by the battalion is about three square miles, but is a densely populated urban zone of about 500,000 people. “It is substantial,” he said.

The turnover of security operations occurred based on the performance of the Iraqi troops policing their own neighborhoods. Blackburn said the Iraqi battalion has shown, “an excellent display of leadership and technical capabilities.”

Qussay stated the expansion came with a lot of hard work and was possible because of the successes his battalion has had against the insurgents.

One of the recent successes of Qussay’s troops was the seizure of nearly 100 sticks of plastic explosive C-4, false identification cards and vests and belts that could have been used for suicide attacks during a night raid in north central Baghdad May 8. Four terror suspects were detained in the raid, and Iraqi soldiers found a possible “hit list” of names the suspected insurgents were targeting.

The names of Iraqi Army and Iraqi Police members and other officials were reportedly among those on the list.

Blackburn explained the 1st Iraqi Battalion has routinely captured similar caches and followed up with additional raids to seize higher-level members of the insurgency.

Qussay’s soldiers also proved themselves during the Ashura holy days by limiting insurgent attacks against pilgrims marching to mosques in Baghdad.

The transition occurring in northwest Baghdad will continue as Iraqi Security Forces assume greater control for the security of their own country. “One day, Baghdad will be controlled totally by the Iraqi Security Forces,” Kerry said.

Qussay is ready for that day to come. “We are ready to be responsible for more,” he said.

Iraqi Military Academy strives for officer excellence

By U.S. Army Sgt. W. Watson Martin

214th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

AL RUSTAMIYAH, Iraq – The Iraqi Military Academy Al Rustamiyah re-established its training and educational programs last January with a class of 135 cadets. IMAR's mission is to develop the qualities of leadership, character and intellect demanded of an Iraqi Armed Services officer.

The Iraqi leadership modeled IMAR after England's famous Royal Military Academy Sandhurst, where its training and curriculum produce some of the world's finest officers. The British and the Iraqi military have very old ties here – the British oversaw the construction of IMAR's first buildings in 1924. When the first Gulf War began in 1991, the British and Iraqis were forced to break their long-standing professional relationship.

After the abandonment of the academy in January 2003, severe looting occurred until the U.S. Army occupied the site later that year. The Coalition Military Assistance Training Team took control of the site March 2004 and began reconstruction two months later, said British Col. Neil Hutton, a paratrooper from the Royal British Army and consultant here. CMATT contingent includes 16 British, two Danish, two Polish, three Hungarian, two Lithuanian, one Dutch and 12 U.S. troops.

The academy is located six miles southeast of Baghdad where, viewed from aboard a Blackhawk helicopter, extensive transformation is visible from the dust and rubble surrounding reconstruction sites. A small northern section of the military compound houses a U.S. Army brigade, while the Iraqi military inhabits the mid-section and over three to five thousand squatters illegally stake the southern portion.



The 50-meter Olympic size swimming pool is just one of the modernized facilities at IMAR.
Photo by U.S. Army Sgt. W. Watson Martin

With a \$100 million budget and detailed planning, IMAR will develop into a great training environment, according to Academy officials. The base is just like any other, including a basketball gymnasium, an Olympic-size indoor pool, study halls, a base laundry, a medical clinic, obstacle courses, weapons ranges, Morale Welfare and Recreation buildings, base exchange, barber shop, motor pool compound, quartermaster store, an armory and warehouses.

The academy's over-arching priorities include the completion of all building projects with the assistance of over

1,000 Iraqi workers and contractors; the training of the Iraqi staff to take over all logistics functions; the deployment of selected cadets and instructors to British military schools for eight to 12 week courses; and the commitment to training excellence within the instruction. All of these efforts, projected for December completion, will strengthen and sharpen the one-year concentrated officer basic course, according to IMAR officials.



Iraqi cadets, who recently transitioned to the second phase of training, march from a building where they continue their military studies.
Photo by U.S. Army Sgt. W. Watson Martin

Until then, CMATT advisers will continue to work hand-in-hand with the Iraqi officers to provide encouragement and counsel to instructors and students alike.

"They are a very proud people – we must let the non-commissioned officers train the cadets without too much interference from Iraqi officers or the advisers," said Danish Sgt. Maj. Stefam Nielsem, a former instructor at the Denmark Army Combat School. Advisers, nonetheless, work closely with the company commanders during the after-action reviews to ensure proper corrective measures are taken for the instructors, he said.

IMAR plans on starting a course for Iraq's pre-war colonels in order to show them how the military can be more effective without the old regime's methods of harsh punishments



Iraqi trainers conduct intense physical training to stay in shape and prepare cadets for the rigors of officership and leadership in the Iraqi Army.
Photo by U.S. Army Sgt. W. Watson Martin

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IMAR

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to its troops, he said. Having established a new mindset on how to discipline cadets for breaking the rules, morale should remain stable. For example, if they are caught smoking indoors, they are ordered to pick up cigarette butts instead of standing in the sun or remaining in the front leaning rest position for long periods, he said.

Further training outside of Iraq will help its future leaders incorporate new ways of thinking. "There will be 34 instructors going to the Wales' Brecon Infantry Training Center for a 12-week course. They will teach the third class of cadets in September," said Nielsen. "I look forward to seeing how many come back."

As for the cadre and cadets, "you must admire them because they face a lot of danger – one family got beaten for their son's courage," he said.

"The terrorists killed my friend. My brother told me to quit (the academy)," said an Iraqi staff officer. "I am not ready to die as a slave and will never go back to the old regime," he replied. "If the bad guys come, I will take some down with me."



Fresh recruits test their agility and strength at one of the Iraqi Military Academy Al Rustamiyah's obstacle courses. It is the recruits' fourth day of a five day evaluation period.

Photo by U.S. Army Sgt. W. Watson Martin

"I have been here four days and find (training) good and very easy; I am not afraid to be here," said Saif, a fresh recruit of the second class. On the other hand, another recruit said, "I am very tired and find the jumps (physical exercise) very difficult."

The rigorous training happens over a concentrated one-year period with three phases. Once the cadets complete the first four-month phase, they are

given increased privileges such as moving into four to six-man room barracks.

"The future of IMAR looks pretty bright," said U.S. Marine Capt. Bryan Esprit, an adviser overseeing the obstacle course. "You can measure the interest of the program from the 40 applicants a week."

Out of the initial 135 candidates, only 90 remain in training. Some quit because they find it too difficult or receive threats from insurgents. Two of those 90 cadets, in their second phase, will receive further training in England. "I was at this academy as a cadet just before Saddam fell. Now, I notice (IMAR) to be more developed, and I have more enthusiasm," said Cadet Ali. He is following the foot-



Iraqi cadets conduct drill and ceremony training by marching in ranks and sounding off with cadence during the second week of training.

Photo by U.S. Army Sgt. W. Watson Martin

steps of his brother and uncles who are officers in the Iraqi military.

Acceptance to the academy is merit based and does not discriminate on the basis of ethnic or religious background, according to IMAR officials. Kurdish cadets are integrated here as well as Sunnis and Shiites from all over Iraq. "The Iraqi officials are quite satisfied they are getting full representation," said Hutton.

"When cadets graduate they can say, 'I've been through a tough academy,' while holding their head high," he added.



Physical preparation is an important part of the Iraqi Military Academy Al Rustamiyah program. Cadet training includes conditioning exercises such as sit-ups (top), agility drills such as the obstacle course (right) and a leaders reaction course (bottom) to build teamwork and assess problem solving abilities.

Photos by U.S. Army Sgt. W. Watson Martin



Navy Seabees rebuilding Iraq as construction managers

By U.S. Army Sgt. W. Watson Martin

214th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

BAGHDAD, Iraq – Seabees assisted in the construction of 19 major Iraqi military facilities and more than 60 smaller bases in support of Iraqi Security Forces engaged in defending their homeland from terrorists, said Navy Lt. Cmdr. Jeff Hicks, Engineering Director, Coalition Military Assistance Training Team.



Iraqi contract workers reconstruct a mosque in Umm Qasr last January.

Photo by U.S. Navy Lt. Cmdr. Jeff Hicks

Security Transition Command – Iraq in the International Zone, employs five Seabees from the 5th NMCB and nine more from around the world.

Most Seabees work as project managers on major construction projects such as the \$64 million contract at the Baghdad Police College. The College is a major compound undergoing many projects while still functioning as a training facility, said U.S. Navy Lt. Tamanh Duong, a Seabee project manager. Low water pressure on the entire campus forced officials to pursue contract bids to tap into a new water line from off-site, according to a multinational forces report.

Future projects elsewhere have been identified. During a recent trip to the western Ninawa Province, near the Syrian border, MNSTC-I J7 engineers identified future sites for border forts, said Navy Lt. j.g. Tyler Wolf, a Civil Engineer Corps officer.

The recent budget actions and contract awards by the J7 office mainly support Iraqi military construction projects, said Hicks. Currently the CMATT is in the process of funding the construction of more Iraqi brigades, so recruits will have a home upon completion of basic and unit training.

The United States Congress looks at all of the needs for Iraqi reconstruction, but only funds what it can; inevitably, some of the contracts get cancelled, said Hicks.

“We contract via three means: Air Force Center of Environmental Excellence (AFCEE), U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) or direct to Iraqis,” said Hicks. The two U.S. contracting agencies have American firms who are in Iraq to manage the projects using Iraqi subcontractors to perform the actual construction work.



Coalition Military Assistance Training Team, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and border patrol officials review maps of border fort locations on the Syrian, Turkish and Dahouk, Iraq Province border.

Photo by U.S. Navy Lt. Cmdr. Jeff Hicks

“We are currently employing approximately 12,000 Iraqis on our construction projects and expect that number to hold steady or increase during the summer... as old projects finish and new ones start up,” he said. Locally available materials are purchased here in country; items not locally available are purchased via other Middle East countries such as Jordan and Kuwait,” said Hicks. “Up north, the out of country materials come almost exclusively from Turkey,” he added.

MNSTC-I has managed over \$1.7 billion of projects all over Iraq and has over another \$1 billion earmarked for similar projects in the 2005 supplemental budget appropriation, according to Hicks.

While assisting in the reconstruction of Iraq, the Seabees continue to be out-and-about to assist the Iraqis in the security of a free and just society.



Iraqi contract workers continue to build a border fort at Umm Qasr last January.

Photo by U.S. Navy Lt. Cmdr. Jeff Hicks

Saddam's carpentry factory discovered

By U.S. Army Capt. Tim Jeffers
MNSTC-I Public Affairs

BAGHDAD, Iraq – Soldiers with the Multi-National Security Transition Command - Iraq J-7 office made a surprise discovery here this past week. While examining an Iraqi government property which was recently vacated by the squatter program, U.S. Army Col. Michael Rorex and an Iraqi engineer decided to investigate a large enclosed area in proximity to the property.

A tall, soft-spoken 101st Airborne officer from Huntsville, Ala., Col. Rorex was terribly curious about the large compound in the distance. He and an Iraqi engineer, accompanied by several other soldiers, decided to investigate the walled compound. The soldiers knocked on the door and were greeted by an Iraqi gentlemen who, it turned out, had been the former regime's caretaker for the facility. Inside the compound, Rorex and the other soldiers found a spacious yard filled with



Piles of treated lumber discovered at former carpentry factory of Saddam Hussein.
Photo by U.S. Army 1st Lt. Jon Caldwell

thick, treated lumber. The facility, referred to as the carpentry factory, had been used by the regime to store wood materials used for furniture building and general construction.



Some of this confiscated wood will be used to build an obstacle course at FOB Solidarity.
Photo by U.S. Army 1st Lt. Jon Caldwell

According to Rorex, "We found thousands of board feet of lumber. It was quite an impressive sight." When asked why no one had tried to sell it or get rid of it somehow, Rorex pointed out the volume, density, and weight of the wood piles. Having reviewed photos of the large, random stacks, it became apparent why the valuable resources had remained.

The wood will now be used to benefit Iraqi Security Forces. Specifically, some of the lumber will be used to build an obstacle course at Forward Operating Base Solidarity. Even after two years in Baghdad, Coalition and Iraqi Security Forces are still finding some surprises. In this case, it's a pleasant one.



TAJI, Iraq - An Iraqi Army banner is displayed during a basic training graduation ceremony (above) at the Iraqi Army Training Academy in Taji, Iraq. Soldiers of 5th Battalion, 1st Brigade, 6th Iraqi Army Division stand in formation (right) during a graduation ceremony. The soldiers completed a two-week training program which included basic soldiering skills, marksmanship, and urban warfare techniques. They also learned how to interact with the Iraqi citizens they will be protecting and the different strategies to fight terrorists.

Photos by U.S. Army Spc. Matthew Wester, 3rd Brigade, 1st Armored Division Public Affairs



Contracting course builds Iraqi capability

By U.S. Army Lt. Col Michael Sainsbury

MNSTC-I Office Staff Judge Advocate

BAGHDAD, Iraq – One of the keys to a successful transition for the responsibility of the security mission in Iraq is building contracting capacity within existing Iraqi institutions. Multi-National Security Transition Command - Iraq laid the foundation for building such capacity May 9-12.

MNSTC-I, in conjunction with the Iraq Reconstruction and Management Office and the Joint Contracting Command - Iraq, hosted a Building Iraq Contracting Capacity course at the al Rasheed Hotel in Baghdad's International Zone.

The goal of the course was to train and educate Iraqis involved in the procurement process on various aspects of a sound government procurement system. Based on the beaming smiles of the graduates, that goal appeared to be achieved.



Mr. Wayne Glass, an instructor from Defense Acquisition University, leads a discussion on project management with Iraqi contracting officials during the Building Iraq Contracting Capacity course.

Photo by U.S. Marine Capt. James Gordon

"We're not here to tell you how you should do contracting in Iraq. Rather, we want to expose you to some ideas and concepts we use for possible integration

into your procurement system," said U.S. Army Lt. Col. Steven Cummings, Instructor, Defense Acquisition University, in his opening lecture.

This consensus building approach set the tone for a lively week of dialogue, discussion, and debate over government contracting. Participants included representatives from the Ministry of Defense, Ministry of Interior, Commission on Public Integrity, and the JCC-I. Forty Iraqi students attended the training which included lectures and small group problem solving sessions.

Although MNSTC-I organized and funded the event, the actual training was conducted by experts in the field of procurement. The MoD General Counsel opened the program with an overview of Iraqi contracting procedures under the former Coalition Provisional Authority.

Mr. Wayne Glass, Instructor, Defense Acquisition University, and Cummings provided instruction on integrated product teams, life-cycle costs, leadership, logistics planning and project management. U.S. Air Force Maj. Mark Milam, Instructor, U.S. Air Force Judge Advocate General's School and U.S. Army Lt. Col. Peter Vint, Assistant Staff Judge Advocate, JCC-I covered procurement integrity, the role of the contracting officer, and a 'model' contracting of-fice lesson.

The training was further assisted by personnel from the Defense Institute for International Legal Studies, based in Newport, RI, and the MNSTC-I J-1 translators. The al Rasheed Hotel provided the rooms, meals and beverages throughout the week.

Due to the overall success of the contracting conference and the enthusiasm shown by the Iraqi participants, follow-on training is currently scheduled for next month.

Iraqi Emergency Response Unit nabs high value targets

BAGHDAD – A highly trained Iraqi police unit provided reconnaissance, planning, and execution for an early morning raid of a residence in the al Ameriya neighborhood of central Baghdad May 16, according to a multinational forces report.

The Iraqi National Police Emergency Response Unit captured five individuals at the residence, including the targets of the operation – two Amirs (Princes) accused of participating in terrorist acts and also financiers of terrorist operations against Iraqis. The suspects detained included: Em-meer Falah Mohammed Younis Hassan (prince), Fadhel Mohammed Younis Hassan (brother of Falah), Alyass Taha Saad (prince), Moeeyad Taha Saad (brother of Alyass), and Saddam Dakhel Abass (aka Khodher Alhaya Almola).

The assault was a surprise attack as the individuals were still asleep. ERU personnel used ladders to gain access to the residence bypassing an entrance gate that was secured by a metal chain with a padlock. There were no shots fired or flash-bang devices utilized during the operation.

Equipment recovered during the raid included a computer tower, computer-software, compact disks, different identification cards, new Iraqi passports, and a Glock pistol. The suspects are currently detained for questioning.

The Iraqi ERU provided its own support and security at the target area. There was no external support for either a cordon or quick reaction force. No injuries or loss of equipment were reported during the operation.

Iraqi Security Forces / In Brief

Local citizens lead Iraqi Security Forces to buried cache

SALMAN PAK – Iraqi citizens in the area of Salman Pak aided the police by leading them directly to a location where a large red water container was uncovered and found to contain weapons, ammunition, and explosives May 12, according to a multinational forces report.

Elements of the 1st Brigade, 1st Division of the Iraqi Intervention Forces and Troop A, 3-7 U.S. Cavalry were called in to investigate the cache and identified the following items: nine rocket-propelled grenade launchers, 53 RPG rounds, one PKC machine gun, 20,000 rounds of 7.62 mm linked ammunition, 12 AK-47 automatic rifles, three hand grenades and TNT.

The weapons were taken to a nearby military installation and the ordinance was destroyed on the scene. No injuries or damages were reported.

Police commandos repel attack and take prisoners

RAMADI – A squad of 1st Battalion Iraqi Police Commandos were guarding an entry control point (ECP) near here May 13, when one adult male insurgent approached and tried to take one of the Iraqi policemen hostage at which point a brief firefight started, according to a multinational forces report.

The ECP began to take small arms fire from two different directions. The Commandos responded by attacking the insurgent positions and driving approximately 60 insurgents back in an easterly direction.

During the engagement, 45 suspected insurgents were captured, many testing positive for explosive materials on their hands. Four insurgents were killed. The commando hostage involved in the failed kidnapping was fatally wounded in the exchange of fire. Another commando was shot seven times and survived.

Seven suspects were later released. The remaining detainees were processed for further questioning.

Combined Iraqi raid captures former regime officers

BAGHDAD – Iraqi Police Commandos and Iraqi Army Intervention Forces conducted separate raids that captured two former regime officers and seven insurgents as well as hand drawn maps of Baghdad International Airport May 14, according to a multinational forces report.

A company-size element of police commandos from the Ministry of Interior went to the Salhiya neighborhood where they captured Capt. Al'a Kamel Ahmed and 1st Lt. Hassan Kamel Ahmed.

The 1st Brigade, 1st Division Iraqi Intervention Forces received a tip from an Iraqi civilian indicating the presence of several insurgents in a house where the maps were found along with a computer, two AK-47s, a Mosen Nagant bolt action rifle, a rifle with grenade launcher attachment, two machetes, protective mask and cell phone parts.

Independent Iraqi operation nets 26 anti-Iraq forces

MUQDADIYAH – An independently planned and executed cordon and search operation by Iraqi forces led to the capture of 26 anti-Iraq forces May 14, according to a multinational forces report.

Operation Breadbasket, conducted by the 2nd Brigade, 5th Iraqi Army Division, also netted three regional AIF leaders. Officials said this operation is the most recent example of the growing capability of the Iraqi Army.

Elsewhere in Muqdadiah, an Iraqi explosive ordnance disposal team destroyed an improvised explosive device discovered May 14 by Coalition forces.

Iraqi and Coalition forces destroy car bomber at checkpoint

MOSUL – Iraqi police conducting roving checkpoint training with Coalition forces came under attack by a vehicle borne improvised explosive device May 14, according to a multinational forces report.

Coalition military police and Iraqi police liaison officers were training 45 Iraqi police officers in checkpoint operations when a vehicle approached their position at a high rate of speed. The convoy carrying police officers fired on the vehicle which caused it to explode prematurely. One police officer was killed and an IPLO, two MPs, and three civilians were injured in the blast. The report praised the efforts and quick reaction of the Iraqi police and MPs for saving a countless number of lives.



Joint raids by Iraqi and Coalition forces in the Samarra area 11 May uncovered one of the largest caches to date in the region. Ammunition and weapons recovered included over 150 155 mm and 120 mm mortar rounds, various mines, completed improvised explosive devices, numerous blasting caps, several rocket propelled grenades, AK-47 rifles, PKC light machine guns, rolls of detonation cord, training manuals, antenna phone systems, two 10-foot long surface to air rocket boosters, 60 mm mortar rounds, rocket propelled grenade and mortar sights, surveying equipment, mortar launch tubes and an advanced shoulder fired anti-tank guided missile. The units also discovered large quantities of intelligence to include a brief case and two garbage bags full of information.

U.S. Army photo

Iraqi Security Forces / In Brief

Video tapes of IED attacks found
KARMAH – Iraqi soldiers detained two suspected insurgents who had possession of video tapes of IED attacks on Coalition forces May 14, according to a multinational forces report.

The 2nd Battalion, 3rd Brigade, 6th Division, formerly known as the Muthana Brigade, and the 3rd Brigade, 8th Division carried out the cordon and search mission.

The house in which the insurgents were found had been visited by Iraqi Security Forces two months prior. A weapons cache was found in the back yard, but at that time there was no one in the house to link to the cache.

Weapons cache found in open field
TAL ABTHA – Iraqi police led Iraqi soldiers and Coalition forces to a cache of assorted ordnance May 14, according to a multinational forces report.

The cache consisted of two rocket-propelled grenade launchers, 12 RPG rounds, seven mortar rounds, 31 boxes of Jordanian armor-piercing ammunition, six fuses, and 144 anti-aircraft rounds.

The 2nd Battalion, 3rd Brigade, 2nd Iraqi Army Division, formerly known as the 107th Battalion of the Iraqi Army, located the weapons cache in an open field.

Ramadi sniper captured
FALLUJAH – Iraqi and Coalition Army Soldiers conducting a cordon and knock mission captured a known enemy sniper May 14, according to a multinational forces report.

Iraqi Army and Coalition forces captured Mahzen Hamad Amun and detained three other suspected insurgents without incident. Amun is reportedly responsible for numerous attacks on Coalition forces. The report states that the capture of this particular suspect will likely reduce the threat of sniper activity in western Ramadi.

Local citizens aid Iraqi Army patrol
TAJI – Iraqi Army soldiers conducting traffic control points and security patrols here May 14 were directed to a house suspected of insurgent activity by local residents, according to a multinational forces report.

Soldiers from 3rd Company, 1st Battalion, 1st Brigade of the 1st Division Iraqi Intervention Forces conducted a cordon and search of the area and captured seven suspected insurgents. The soldiers also found a computer, 70 propaganda DVDs, and 60 “how to” books on jihad. Two detainees were later released.

In a related operation, soldiers from 4th Company, 2nd Battalion, 1st Brigade, 1st Division IIF detained three insurgents suspected of firing mortars. One of the suspects attempted to stab an Iraqi soldier during the capture while another suspect signed a statement admitting guilt.

Civilian tip leads to weapons and four suspected insurgents
SAMARRA – Coalition forces conducting routine patrols in Samarra were directed to a local fire department believed to be hiding weapons and insurgents May 16, according to a multinational forces report.

U.S. Soldiers from 3-69 found 30 AK-47s, one high powered rifle, one 9 mm fully automatic pistol, eight bayonets, three fragmentary grenades, two walkie-talkies, two rocket-propelled grenade AK adapters, and 33 AK magazines. Four suspected anti-Iraq forces were detained.

No injuries or damages were reported.

Coalition forces discover large cache near Lake Thar Thar
RAMADI – Coalition forces conducting a sweep in an area southeast of Lake Thar Thar found a large collection of mortar systems, munitions, and equipment May 16, according to a multinational forces report.

Soldiers from the 2nd Marine Amphibious Assault Battalion discovered the cache and reported the following items: 22 mortar bipods, six night sights, 17 82 mm mortar tubes, one 60 mm mortar tube, 13 mortar sights, one set of body armor, one 120 mm mortar tube, 24 mortar base plates, one AK-47, one bolt-action rifle, three tripods, 7,000 rounds of 7.62 mm ammunition, three rocket-propelled grenades, two 120 mm high explosive rounds, three 100 mm high explosive rounds, six 82 mm high explosive mortars, six 107 mm rockets, 40 British MK1 hand grenades, 36 MK1 detonators, one 57 mm rocket, 250 various grenade fuses, three bags of mortar propellant, and two 107 mm rocket launchers. The cache was destroyed in place.

Iraqi equipment rollup

A look at some of the equipment delivered to the Iraqi Security Forces this week

| | |
|-----------------------------------|----------------------------|
| Ammunition..... | 3.23 million rounds |
| Weapons..... | 6,717 |
| Individual body armor..... | 3,537 |
| Individual helmets..... | 1,700 |
| Vehicles..... | 596 |

— Information provided by MNSTC-I J-4

Iraqi Security Forces / In Brief

Iraqi police track down mortars

BAGHDAD – Iraqi police responded to repeated mortar attacks on the site of their future headquarters by conducting their own intelligence gathering and cordon and knock operations resulting in the capture of two anti-Iraq forces May 15, according to a multinational forces report.

Members of the 1st Battalion, 2nd Iraqi Public Order Brigade, led by Col. Majed, launched a mission to disrupt repeated mortar attacks on their compound which had occurred over a period of weeks. The mission resulted in the capture of two suspected insurgents, a mortar tube, a laptop computer, night vision goggles, and \$1,500 U.S.

The former squatter site is now under construction and will house the battalion headquarters for the POB. Two weeks ago, a car bomber attacked the same site but was deterred by significant force protection with minimal reported damage. In the meantime, the policemen continued to receive threats and mortar fire. Following a mortar attack causing the death of a construction worker May 12, Majed decided a more aggressive posture was necessary.

Local resident leads Iraqi Army to wanted terrorist

BAGHDAD – An elite Iraqi Army unit received assistance from an area resident in efforts to capture an international terrorist wanted by the U.S. Federal Bureau of Investigation May 15, according to a multinational forces report.

A former Iraqi soldier and double agent, Nazer Al Hilo, reportedly received training from Hezbollah for activity in the U.S. He was captured along with medications, a cell phone, and various documents. It is believed that his detention may yield additional insights into high level terrorist operations against Iraq and the U.S.

No injuries or damages were reported.

Looking back

One year ago in Iraq

The Spanish Defense Ministry stated May 21, 2004, it has completed its troop withdrawal from Iraq, fulfilling a campaign pledge made by Spanish Prime Minister Jose Luis Rodriguez. The final Spanish soldiers withdrawing from Iraq have crossed the border to Kuwait, fulfilling the new Spanish government's pledge to pull out.

The remaining group handed over its base in the southern town of Diwaniyah to U.S. forces before departing. Spain's previous government had sent about 1,400 troops to Iraq, despite widespread public opposition.

Local police capture cop killers

KIRKUK – An Iraqi police patrol responding to reports of a police shooting in Kirkuk, located a vehicle matching the description put out by Iraqi police officials and successfully arrested three suspects May 16, according to a multinational forces report.

Quoria Police Capt. Hadeer and two other police officers were attacked on the Baghdad Road in Kirkuk by a vehicle containing three anti-Iraq forces firing an AK-47 automatic rifle. Hadeer was wounded fatally while the other two officers suffered less serious wounds.

Shortly after the attack, a police patrol in another jurisdiction identified the subject vehicle and managed to arrest the occupants. The Domies Police found evidence linking the vehicle and occupants to the attack in Kirkuk. The suspects are being held pending ballistics tests.

Police commandos capture enemy weapons and equipment

BAGHDAD – Iraqi Police Commandos continue to disrupt insurgent operations by capturing stored weapons and materials for improvised explosive devices May 17, according to a multinational forces report.

Officers with the 2nd and 3rd Battalions, 2nd Brigade Police Commandos detained 22 anti-Iraq forces during patrols in Baghdad. The following items were confiscated: one 155 mm artillery shell, one 105 mm round, 12 60 mm rounds, one 60 mm mortar tube, three 82mm mortar rounds, one rocket-propelled grenade high explosive round, five RPG anti-tank rounds, one RPG anti-personnel round, two RPG launchers, one grenade, one anti-personnel mine, three AK-47 rifles with ammunition, 30 feet of red detonation cord, five cell phones and electronic initiators prepped for IEDs, antennas, black masks, and communications wire.

Elsewhere 2nd Battalion, 1st Brigade Police Commandos discovered an IED near Salman Pak. The device consisted of five 122 mm artillery shells, two 155 mm artillery shells, one rocket-propelled grenade anti-personnel round connected with wiring and a detonation switch.

No injuries or damages were reported.

Iraqi Army Intervention Forces 'torpedo' AIF cache

BAGHDAD – While on patrol, Iraqi Army forces discovered a cache containing two torpedos and various other munitions and bomb-making materials here May 17, according to a multinational forces report.

Soldiers from the 3rd Battalion, 1st Brigade Iraqi Army Intervention Forces found over 100 mortar rounds, one 155 mm artillery round, 50 rocket-propelled grenades, 30 anti-personnel mines, 10 anti-tank mines, and 10 rolls of detonation cord. The cache was transported to a local police station until it could be destroyed by an explosive ordinance disposal team.

Iraqi Security Forces / In Brief

Iraqi Police graduate 167 from advanced training courses

BAGHDAD – The Iraqi Police Service graduated 167 police officers from advanced training and specialty courses at the Adnan Training Facility here May 19, as part of the Iraqi government's on-going effort to train its security forces.

The courses consist of Basic Criminal Investigations with 58 graduates, Interview and Interrogations with 21 graduates, Critical Incident Management with 25 graduates, Violent Crime Investigation with 29 graduates, Mid-level Management with 19 graduates and Basic Computer Skills with 15 graduates.

This was the initial class for the Basic Computer Skills course. The course is designed to provide students with sufficient computer skills to create, save, store and retrieve documents. The students are also presented with instruction on accessing the internet and utilizing search engines for research and other functions.

Officers who participated in these courses previously completed either an eight-week basic training course for new recruits or a three-week 'transitional integration program' course designed for prior-service officers.

The police officers report back for continued duty at their respective stations immediately.

Fourth Public Order Police Brigade graduates

By Ann Bertucci

Civilian Police Assistance Training Team Public Affairs

NUMANIYAH, Iraq – Iraqi Police graduated 1,229 Public Order Brigade officers here May 19. The officers completed a demanding six-week training program conducted at the Civil Intervention Force Academy at Numaniyah Military Base.



Officers of the 4th Public Order Brigade salute during a pass-and-review ceremony at the May 19 graduation. Photo by Ann Bertucci

"With faith, this brigade has willingly borne all the hard efforts of training," said Iraqi Gen. Na-jeem, the 4th Public Order Brigade Commander. "They promised to achieve peace in the dearest Iraq, through standing against terrorism wherever it is found. They were interactive with their instructors and with the supervisory committee that led them in this training. That's why this academy has named these men the 'Golden Eagle Brigade'."

The POBs have been utilized as a bridging force to restore and maintain law and order in cities where the police force has not yet been established or will be reconstituted due to insurgent activity. They provide a critical security presence and ensure the safety and security of the local populace.

The officers and recruits of the 4th POB impressed their trainers with their dedication and sense of purpose. "They are well-trained, well-led and highly motivated," said U.S. Army Col. Ted Westhusing, program manager, counter-terrorism special operations, Civilian Police Assistance Training Team. "Without a doubt, once deployed, they will get right into the fight."

During the six-week course, students received training in policing skills, weapons training, urban operations, and close quarters tactics as well as human rights and police ethics.

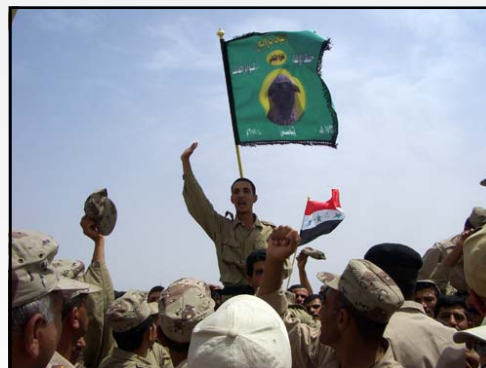
Major General Rasheed, Commander of the Police Commandos, attended the graduation ceremony. He praised the graduating officers and recruits for their efforts and achievements during training. "You are the vehicle that will defeat terrorism in Iraq," he



The graduation ceremony featured formations of Iraqi flags and new recruits. Photo by Ann Bertucci

said. "Terrorism cannot succeed here."

Following the ceremony, the graduates cheered and sang songs of loyalty to Iraq. "My job is to serve and save my country," one recruit said.



The 4th Public Order Brigade graduates celebrated by singing songs of loyalty to Iraq. Photo by Ann Bertucci

The officers attending the course came from areas throughout Iraq and will be deployed to their respective assignments following graduation. More than 3,400 officers who previously completed the course have been outfitted, equipped and deployed in support of security operations.

Iraqi Security Forces / In Brief

Iraqi tip leads Iraqi police to cache

BAGHDAD – An Iraqi unit from the 2nd Public Order Battalion seized more than 1,500 pounds of ammunition and explosives May 17 in the Salman Pak area of Baghdad.

The cache was discovered after a local resident alerted the Public Order Battalion to its location. Iraqi soldiers uncovered more than 250 mortar rounds, seven rockets, one rocket warhead, 40 anti-tank mines and 47 rocket-propelled grenade rounds. The unit also found three missiles, detonation cord and numerous primers, detonators, grenades and bomb-making materials.

"This is the largest cache I have seen here," said U.S. Army Staff Sgt. Brandon Gold, C Troop, 3rd Squadron, 7th Cavalry. "The Iraqi soldiers are very aggressive and are always out looking for the terrorists or their ammunition and weapons caches."

The Iraqi unit was searching near a cemetery when the local man provided the information. Salman Pak residents have taken the bold move to embrace the Iraqi Security Forces in a community that had been very loyal to the former regime.

"The people here trust us; they trust the Iraqi government, too. They know what we have done for them in Salman Pak. They want to help us catch all the terrorists," said one POB Iraqi officer, who declined to be identified.

When asked how the fighting is going against the terrorists, the officer said, "It is not fighting; it is more of a game of cat and mouse. The terrorists are not cowards; they are less than cowards." He added that he is confident that the discovery of ammunition caches will continue to hinder terrorist operations.

The POB officer also explained his feelings about the American presence in Iraq, stating that America will someday leave and that soon Iraq would take full responsibility for their own affairs.

"American Soldiers are like visitors to my home; I welcome them in and expect nothing but friendship and support when they leave," he said. "Iraq will finish the fight with the terrorists."

Another soldier in the command, a former captain in the Iraqi Army, who preferred not to be identified, is performing his duty in the enlisted ranks.

"My job now is to be a gunner; but although my eyes are always sharp for terrorists, who are always scared of us; it is the reaction of the Iraqi people who make this job most worthwhile," he said. "All of the (Iraqi) kids wave at us and it is my joy to give them candy; the adults are glad to see us, too. They know we are giving them peace while the terrorists only give pain."

Explosive ordnance disposal teams from the ISF and coalition forces destroyed all the munitions and equipment that could not be utilized by the ISF. (Task Force Baghdad Public Affairs)

Joint operation leads to capture of 110 suspected insurgents

ASH SHARQAT – Coalition and Iraqi Security Forces performed cordon and search operations in Heychal Salama resulting in the detainment of 150 suspected anti-Iraq forces May 17, according to a multinational forces report.

"Operation Boomerang" was designed to put pressure on a perceived AIF safe haven and led to the capture of two Russian light machine guns, three long rifles, 134 AK-47s, 200 magazines, six bandoliers, and two pistols.

One hundred and ten detainees were held for further questioning after 40 detainees were released. No injuries or damages were reported.

Iraqi police dispose of cache

QABR ABD – Iraqi police located a weapons cache here May 18, according to a multinational forces report.

Police reported finding one rocket-propelled grenade, 14 RPG rounds, 30 RPG propellants, 16 60 mm mortar rounds, one 60 mm mortar tube, 26 mortar fuses, one anti-tank mine, one unexploded ordnance, one crate of TNT, and 13 sticks of plastic explosive. A Coalition military explosive ordnance disposal team cleared the area.

Iraqi citizens report weapons find

SALMAN PAK – Having received a report from local citizens about the discovery of a weapons cache, Iraqi police quickly located and cleared the collection of weapons May 18, according to a multinational forces report.

The following weapons were identified by Iraqi police on the scene: two 152 mm artillery shells, two 80 mm rounds, one 80 mm rocket, one rocket warhead, eight 60 mm mortar rounds, 44 60 mm rocket bodies, six 30 mm rockets, one hand crank, 40 anti-tank mines, one box of mortar primers, and 200 grenade primers. All items were secured awaiting an explosive ordnance disposal team. No injuries or damages were reported.

Intel leads to capture of wanted terrorist

KIRKUK – Iraqi police and Coalition military forces planned a hasty raid on a house here May 19, according to a multinational forces report.

The units received intelligence on the whereabouts of a suspect believed to be involved in the killing of an Iraqi Police Service officer. The police searched the house and detained Luay Hilal Ghaeb. Ghaeb was taken to a local police facility where he was determined to be wanted in connection with terrorist activities and recent police shootings.

Search nets explosives

AL BASRAH – Iraqi police were tipped-off that a house in the Tunina District of Al Basrah was stashing a large quantity of rockets May 19, according to a multinational forces report.

Police searched the area and the specific location identified, and reported finding four high explosive hand grenades, seven hand grenade fuses, two practice grenades, one rocket-propelled grenade warhead fuse, four AK-47 magazines, two Glock 9 mm pistols and ammunition. Indications on the scene suggest that the rockets were removed shortly before the police arrived. An Iraqi Police Service member is being investigated as a suspect.

Armed Forces Day, Memorial Day 2005 message from the Secretary of Defense

I am pleased to join millions of Americans in honoring the brave men and women in uniform -- those who serve today, those who have fallen in battle, and those veterans who proudly served in the past.

My father volunteered to serve in the Navy after the surprise attack on Pearl Harbor. Millions enlisted to battle against the tide of tyranny then threatening the world. And I was privileged to serve in the Navy some 50 years ago. Now, more than 50 years later, I count my time in uniform as a most important period in my life. Thousands, if not millions, of others who have served undoubtedly feel the same way.

Military service has always been one of our country's most noble callings. America has long been the defender of liberty -- the country that has stepped forward to defend those who could not defend themselves. This was true from our country's early days at Lexington and Concord, where the earliest citizen soldiers defended their farms and homes, their new country, and the cause of freedom. In the years that followed, the U.S. armed forces have become freedom's champion -- at Gettysburg; in the forest of the Argonne; on the beaches of Normandy and Iwo Jima; in the air during the Berlin blockade; and today in places like Kabul and Baghdad.

This new war we face has required our military to adapt its thinking, and challenged us to prepare in new ways. Yet whatever the mission, whatever the challenge that lies before us, each of you who are serving our country are confronting it with grit and courage. I thank each of you and your families for your service to our country.

When my father passed away some 30 years ago, I found a letter in his papers that he had received from then secretary of the Navy, James Forrestal -- who later became the first secretary of defense. Secretary Forrestal apparently sent this letter to all those who served to arrive after they had returned to civilian life. Noting the historic achievements made by the U.S. military, he wrote: "You have served in the greatest Navy in the world. ... It crushed two enemy fleets at once, receiving their surrenders only four months apart. It brought our land-based air power within bombing range of the enemy and set our ground armies on the beachheads of final victory. ... For your part in these achievements you deserve to be proud as long as you live. The nation you served at a time of crisis will remember you with gratitude."

That letter to my father now hangs on my office wall in the Pentagon. It is a reminder to me of our country's fighting spirit. And I see that same spirit in the actions of the men and women in uniform every day. It is that spirit that we honor on this holiday: the selfless duty and devotion passed down from generations who served before, and the courage of those who sacrificed their lives in service to our country.

Our country is proud of every member of our armed forces -- volunteers all -- and we are deeply grateful to those who have sacrificed for the cause of liberty. May God bless each of you, may God bless your families, and may God bless our wonderful country.

- Donald H. Rumsfeld

Saturday, May 21, 2005

Did you know?



President Harry S. Truman led the effort to establish a single holiday for U.S. citizens to come together and thank our military members for their patriotic service in support of our country.

On August 31, 1949, U.S. Secretary of Defense Louis Johnson announced the creation of an Armed Forces Day to replace separate Army, Navy, Marine Corps and Air Force Days. The single-day celebration stemmed from the unification of the Armed Forces under one department -- the Department of Defense.

The theme of the first Armed Forces Day was "Teamed for Defense." It was chosen as a means of expressing the unification of all the military forces under a single department of the government. Although this was the theme for the day, there were several other purposes for holding Armed Forces Day. It was a type of "educational program for civilians," one in which there would be an increased awareness of the Armed Forces. It was designed to expand public understanding of what type of job is performed and the role of the military in civilian life. It was a day for the military to show "state-of-the-art" equipment to the civilian population they were protecting. And it was a day to honor and acknowledge the people of the Armed Forces of the United States.